

WISHA REGIONAL DIRECTIVE

WISHA Services

Department of Labor and Industries

10.60 1994 NIOSH POCKET GUIDE IDLH VALUES

Date Issued: September 25, 1997

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I. Background:

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a policy directive on May 21, 1996, prohibiting federal compliance staff from using new or revised IDLH values listed in the 1994 *NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards* for enforcement unless the compliance officer can establish and document industry recognition of the updated IDLH values. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) disclosed in the 1994 guide (p. xi) that the new or revised IDLH values listed were interim and that these values would require another revision after the process for developing IDLHs has been refined.

OSHA also indicated that industry groups have disputed the "appropriateness" of the 1994 IDLH values since NIOSH regards these values to be interim. OSHA instructs CSHOs to use the IDLH values listed in the 1990 version of the guide since these values have gained industry recognition over the years and are not in dispute. The 1990 guide was published with a purple cover, while the 1994 guide has an orange cover. New or revised values in the 1994 guide appear in boldface type, while all other values remain unchanged from the 1990 edition.

II. Scope and Application:

This WRD, which provides guidance to WISHA consultation and compliance staff similar to that provided to federal staff, will remain in effect indefinitely. It incorporates the substance of WISHA Interim Interpretive Memorandum #96-11-F, which is hereby rescinded.

III. Interpretive Guidance

Which *NIOSH Pocket Guide* should WISHA staff rely upon when addressing IDLH issues?

WISHA staff must not base citations upon any new or revised IDLH value listed in the 1994 *NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards* unless they can establish that a specific IDLH value has achieved industry recognition as described in the WISHA Compliance Manual, Chapter IV,

B.2.c.(3)(b)1a-h. In the absence of such industry recognition of the 1994 IDLH value, the 1990 IDLH value must be used instead.

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